



# *Striving Readers*

## FY 2009 Notice Inviting Applications

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# Striving Readers

## Overview

- \$7.2 million in available funds.
  - An estimated 7 grants will be made.
  - Award range: \$750,000 - \$1.3 million.
  - Awards made in September 2009.
- Notice inviting applications
  - June 11, 2009 *Federal Register*.
- Application package:
  - [www.ed.gov/programs/strivingreaders/applicant.html](http://www.ed.gov/programs/strivingreaders/applicant.html)
- Deadlines:
  - July 1, 2009: Notice of intent to apply (optional).
  - August 10, 2009: Application submission.

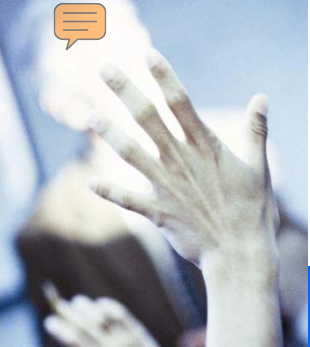


# Eligibility

## State educational agency

- State educational agency (SEA)
  - “[T]he agency primarily responsible for the State supervision of public elementary schools and secondary schools.” [ESEA]
- Applying on behalf of itself and 1 or more local educational agencies (LEAs) that have governing authority over the eligible schools the SEA proposes to include in its application.
  - Includes charter school LEAs.





# Eligibility

## Eligible Schools



- Application must include at least **5 eligible schools** and **750 struggling readers** per year in all of the schools and grades served by the intervention.
  - Schools may be in one or several LEAs.
- Eligible schools—
  - Eligible for aid under ESEA Title I, Part A.
    - See section 1113 of ESEA, or consult LEA and SEA officials responsible for Title I.
  - Serve students in any of grades 6 through 12.
  - Enrolled, during the 2007-08 and 2008-09 school years (or the 2 most recent school years for which data is available), at least 75 students in the grades that will be served by the project who had reading skills that were 2 or more years below grade level.



# Eligibility

## Eligible Students

- Projects serve “struggling readers” who—
  - Are enrolled in any of grades 6 through 12;
  - Have only partial mastery of the prerequisite knowledge and skills that are fundamental for reading at grade level; and
  - Are reading 2 or more grades below grade level when measured on an initial screening reading assessment.






# Priorities

## Absolute priority #1 (required)

### **Implement a supplemental literacy intervention**

- Serve students reading 2 or more grades below grade level in any of grades 6 through 12;
  - Supplement regular English language arts instruction students receive;
  - Instruction exclusively/primarily during the school day (may augment after school); and
  - At least 1 school year in duration.
- 





# Priorities

## Absolute priority #1 (required)

### **Implement a supplemental literacy intervention**

- Intervention must be research-based, flexible enough to meet individual student needs, intense, and include:
  - Explicit vocabulary instruction;
  - Direct and explicit comprehension strategy instruction;
  - Opportunities for extended discussion of text meaning and interpretation;
  - Instruction in reading foundational skills (e.g., decoding and fluency) for students who need to be taught these skills;





# Priorities

## Absolute priority #1 (cont'd)

### **Implement a supplemental literacy intervention**

- Includes (cont'd)
  - Course content intended to improve motivation and engagement in literacy learning; and
  - The use of a nationally normed, reliable, and valid—
    - Screening reading assessment to identify struggling readers; and
    - Diagnostic reading assessment to pinpoint students' instructional needs.
      - See definitions of these terms in the notice and application package.







# Priorities

## Absolute priority #1 (cont'd)

### **Implement a supplemental literacy intervention**

- Intervention must have been implemented in at least 1 school in the U.S. during the preceding 5 years.





# Priorities

## Absolute priority #2 (required)

### **Carry out a rigorous and independent evaluation**

- Use independent evaluator.
  - Role in the project is limited solely to conducting the evaluation.
- Use random lottery to assign eligible struggling readers in each school to either—
  - The supplemental literacy intervention (the “treatment” group); OR
  - Other activities in which they would otherwise participate, such as study hall, electives, or another activity that does not involve supplemental literacy instruction (the “control” group).





# Priorities

## Absolute priority #2 (cont'd)

### **Carry out a rigorous and independent evaluation**

- Include rigorous, appropriate procedures to monitor the integrity of the random assignment of students and—
  - Minimize crossover and contamination between the treatment and control groups (e.g., minimize number of control group students who receive intervention and treatment group students who do not receive intervention.
  - Monitor, document, and, where possible, minimize student attrition from the sample;





# Priorities

## Absolute priority #2 (cont'd)

### **Carry out a rigorous and independent evaluation**

- Measure outcomes of the supplemental literacy intervention using, at a minimum:
  - The reading/language arts assessment used by State to determine whether a school has made adequate yearly progress under part A of title I of ESEA; and
  - A nationally normed, reliable, and valid outcome reading assessment that is closely aligned with the literacy skills targeted by the supplemental literacy intervention;
    - See definition of “outcome reading assessment” in the notice and application package.






# Priorities

## Absolute priority #2 (cont'd)

### **Carry out a rigorous and independent evaluation**

- Use rigorous statistical models to analyze the impact of the supplemental literacy intervention on student achievement;
    - Including the use of students' prior-year test scores as a covariate in the model to improve statistical precision and also including appropriate statistical techniques for taking into account the clustering of students within schools;
  - Include analysis of the fidelity of implementation of the critical features of the supplemental literacy intervention based on data collected by the evaluator;
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# Priorities

## Absolute priority #2 (cont'd)

### **Carry out a rigorous and independent evaluation**

- Include measures designed to ensure high response rates to all data collections;
- Include at least 750 “struggling readers” per year in all of the schools and grades served by the supplemental literacy intervention;
  - Example: 5 schools would need an average of 150 struggling readers in all grades served by the intervention per school.
  - Example: 10 schools would need an average of 75 struggling readers in all grades served by the intervention.







# Priorities

## Absolute priority #2 (cont'd)

### **Carry out a rigorous and independent evaluation**

- Designed to detect not less than a 0.10 standard deviation impact of the supplemental literacy intervention on student achievement;
  - Approximately 3 to 5 months' growth in reading achievement on standardized assessments for the typical student in grades 6 through 12.





# Project Duration and Sequence of Activities

- Grants awarded for up to 48 months.
  - Four, 12-month performance periods.
- Performance Period 1 (10/1/09 – 9/30/10)
  - Evaluators work with ED to refine evaluation plans, conduct random assignment of the first cohort of students, which will be eligible to participate in the intervention at the start of the 2010-11 school year.
  - SEA, LEAs, and schools prepare for implementation of intervention (e.g., purchase curricula and materials, provide professional development to teachers and others).




# Project Duration and Sequence of Activities (cont'd)

- Performance Period 2 (10/1/10 – 9/30/11)
  - Supplemental literacy intervention implemented (cohort 1).
  - Evaluators collect and analyze data on implementation and program impacts for cohort 1.
  - Evaluators conduct random assignment of a second cohort of students which will be eligible to receive the supplemental literacy intervention beginning at the start of the 2011-12 school year.





# Project Duration and Sequence of Activities (cont'd)

- Performance Period 3 (10/1/ 2011 – 9/30/2012)
    - Supplemental literacy intervention implemented (cohort 2).
    - Evaluators collect and analyze data on implementation and program impacts for cohorts 1 and 2.
    - Evaluators submit evaluation reports on the implementation and impact findings for cohort 1.
    - Conduct random assignment of a third cohort of students which will be eligible to receive the supplemental literacy intervention beginning at the start of the 2012-13 school year.
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# Project Duration and Sequence of Activities (cont'd)

- Performance Period 4 (10/1/2012 – 9/30/2013)
  - Supplemental literacy intervention implemented (cohort 3).
  - Evaluators collect and analyze data on implementation and program impacts for cohorts 1, 2, and 3.
  - Evaluators submit evaluation reports on the implementation and impact findings for cohorts 1, 2, and 3.





# Project Implementation

- Grant will be awarded through a cooperative agreement.
  - “Substantial collaboration between the Department and grantee...” (See FAQ)
- Evaluators required to cooperate with technical assistance (TA) provided by ED and its contractor (See FAQ).
- TA contractor will assist grantees and evaluation partners to—
  - Strengthen evaluation designs; and
  - Successfully implement evaluation designs.





# Application Requirements

## Information on intervention

- Applicants must include the following evidence with respect to the supplemental literacy intervention they propose to implement—
  - Evidence that the intervention has been implemented in at least 1 school in the U.S. during the preceding 5 years.
  - A 1-page logic model that shows a clear, logical pathway leading from the project inputs and activities, through classroom instruction, to the expected impacts on students.
  - Description of the screening, diagnostic, and outcome reading assessments of student literacy skills that the applicant proposes to use.



# Application Requirements

## Information on each school

- Applicant must include the following for each school it proposes to include in the project—
  - School's name, location, and enrollment disaggregated by grade level for the 2008-09 school year.
  - State or other assessment data that demonstrate that, during each of the 2007-08 and 2008-09 school years (or the most recent two years for which data are available), a minimum of 75 students in the grades to be served by the intervention were struggling readers.
  - Evidence that the school is eligible to receive funds under ESEA Title I, Part A.



# Application Requirements


## Information on each school

- For each school included in application, applicant also must include a letter from the **superintendent** of the LEA and the **principal** of the school that they agree to—
  - Implement the intervention during the 2010-11, 2011-12, and 2012-13 school years;
  - Allow eligible struggling readers to be randomly assigned to either the intervention or to other activities in which they would otherwise participate, such as a study hall, electives, or other activity that does not involve supplemental reading instruction; and
  - Participate in the evaluation, including in the evaluator's collection of data on student outcomes and program implementation.



# Selection Criteria


## Significance (10 points)

- (1) Potential contribution of project to the development and advancement of theory, research, and practices in the field of adolescent literacy, including--
    - In the case of an intervention that has not been evaluated through a large-scale experimental evaluation, the extent to which other empirical evidence (such as smaller-scale experimental or quasi-experimental studies of the effects of the intervention on student achievement) demonstrates that the intervention is likely to be effective in improving the reading skills of struggling readers; or
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# Selection Criteria

## Significance (10 points) (cont'd)


- In the case of any intervention that has been evaluated by one or more large-scale experimental evaluations, the extent to which—
    - Those evaluations provide evidence that demonstrates the intervention is likely to be effective in improving the reading skills of struggling readers; and
    - The proposed evaluation would increase substantially knowledge in the field of adolescent literacy, such as by studying the effectiveness of the intervention among a different population than studied in previous experimental evaluations or by using an improved evaluation design (such as one that has a marked increase in statistical power).
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# Selection Criteria

## Significance (10 points) (cont'd)


- (2) The extent to which the proposed supplemental literacy intervention can be replicated in a variety of settings without significant modifications.
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# Selection Criteria

## Project Design (50 points)

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- (1) The extent to which the intervention uses a research-based literacy model that is flexible enough to meet the varied needs of struggling readers, intense enough to accelerate the development of literacy skills, and includes, at a minimum, the following practices (20 points):
- Explicit vocabulary instruction;
  - Direct, explicit comprehension strategy instruction;
  - Opportunities for extended discussion of text meaning and interpretation;
  - Instruction in reading foundational skills, such as decoding and fluency (for students who need to be taught these skills);




# Selection Criteria

## Project Design (50 points)(cont'd)

- Course content designed to improve student motivation and engagement in literacy learning; and
- Instruction in writing.


(2) The extent to which the proposed professional development model has sufficient intensity (in terms of the number of hours or days) (10 points).





# Selection Criteria

## Project Design (50 points)(cont'd)

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- (3) The extent to which the provider of the professional development identified in the application has the appropriate experience and knowledge to provide high-quality professional development (10 points).
  - (4) The extent to which the proposed project uses nationally normed, valid, and reliable—
    - Screening reading assessments;
    - Diagnostic reading assessments; and
    - Outcome assessments for evaluating the effectiveness of the intervention. (10 points)



# Selection Criteria

## Project Evaluation (40 points)

(1) The extent to which the evaluation plan includes data from—

- State reading/English language arts assessment used to measure adequate yearly progress under part A of title I of the ESEA; and
- A second, evaluator-administered, nationally normed, reliable, and valid measure of student reading achievement that is closely aligned with the goals of the intervention. (8 points)



# Selection Criteria

## Project Evaluation (40 points) (cont'd)


(2) The extent to which the evaluation plan describes—

- Objective, appropriate method for evaluator to conduct random assignment of students to treatment and control conditions;
- Rigorous, appropriate methods for monitoring the integrity of random assignment and for minimizing crossover and contamination between the treatment and control groups; and
- Rigorous, appropriate methods for monitoring, documenting, and, where possible, minimizing, student attrition from the sample. (8 points)



# Selection Criteria

## Project Evaluation (40 points) (cont'd)

- (3) The extent to which the evaluation plan includes a clear, well-documented, and rigorous method for measuring the fidelity of implementation of the critical features of the intervention (8 points).
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# Selection Criteria


## Project Evaluation (40 points) (cont'd)

- (4) The extent to which the evaluation plan describes rigorous statistical procedures for the analysis of the data that will be collected, including (4 points):
- Clear discussion of relationship between hypotheses, measures, and independent and dependent variables;
  - Appropriate statistical techniques for taking into account the clustering of students within schools;
  - Use of data on students' achievement in prior years as a covariate to improve statistical precision;
  - In the case of qualitative data analyses, use of appropriate and rigorous methods to index, summarize, and interpret data.



# Selection Criteria

## Project Evaluation (40 points) (cont'd)

- (5) The extent to which the independent evaluator identified in the application has experience in conducting scientifically based reading research and in designing and conducting experimental evaluations (8 points).
  - (6) The extent to which the proposed budget allocates sufficient funds to carry out a high-quality evaluation of the proposed project (4 points).
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# Application Contents

- Project Abstract
  - Brief description of proposed project.
- Project Narrative
  - Include a 1-page table of contents.
  - Address all absolute priority requirements and selection criteria.
  - Address selection criteria in order (recommended).
  - Narrative may not exceed 40 pages.
    - Page limit does not apply to cover sheet (form SF 424), abstract, budget section, including the narrative budget justification, assurances and certifications, or attachments (e.g., resumes, letters of support).



# Application Contents

## Budget

- ED Form 524, Section A
  - Grant funds you are requesting, broken out in 12 line items (line 11, training stipends, not applicable)
  - Complete budget form for all 4 years of the project; budgets may vary among years.
  - Budget periods for the grants will be:
    - Oct. 2009-Sept. 2010
    - Oct. 2010-Sept. 2011
    - Oct. 2011-Sept. 2012
    - Oct. 2012-Sept. 2013



# Application Contents

## Budget (cont'd)

- ED Form 524, Section B
  - Non-Federal funds, if any, you are contributing to the project
  - Applicants are **not** required to provide non-Federal funds
- ED Form 524, Section C (Budget Narrative)
  - Provide sufficient detail to enable reviewers and project staff to understand how requested funds will be used, how much will be expended, and the relationship between the requested funds and project activities and outcomes.
  - Review recommended guidelines in application package.
  - Indirect cost rate: may use either unrestricted or restricted rate.



# Application contents

## Other attachments

- Information about proposed intervention.
  - Evidence that the intervention has been implemented in at least 1 school in the U.S. during the preceding 5 years.
  - A 1-page logic model that shows a clear, logical pathway leading from the project inputs and activities, through classroom instruction, to the expected impacts on students.
  - Description of the screening, diagnostic, and outcome reading assessments of student literacy skills that the applicant proposes to use.





# Application contents

## Other attachments (cont'd)

- Information about schools included in application.
  - School's name, location, and enrollment disaggregated by grade level for the 2008-09 school year.
  - State or other assessment data that demonstrate that, during each of the 2007-08 and 2008-09 school years (or the most recent two years for which data are available), a minimum of 75 students in the grades to be served by the intervention were struggling readers.
  - Evidence that the school is eligible to receive funds under ESEA Title I, Part A.



# Application contents

## Other attachments (cont'd)

- Letter from the **superintendent** of LEA and the **principal** of the school that they agree to—
  - Implement the intervention during the 2010-11, 2011-12, and 2012-13 school years;
  - Allow eligible struggling readers to be randomly assigned to either the intervention or to other activities in which they would otherwise participate, such as a study hall, electives, or other activity that does not involve supplemental reading instruction; and
  - Participate in the evaluation, including in the evaluator's collection of data on student outcomes.



# Submission of application

- DEADLINE:  
**August 10, 2009**  
**4:30:00 p.m. Washington, D.C. Time**
- May be submitted electronically using the Electronic Grant Application System (e-Application) **or** in paper format by mail or hand delivery.
- To obtain the the application package, visit:  
<http://www.ed.gov/programs/strivingreaders>



# Submission of application

## e-Application

- The list of procedures is on [page 18](#) of the paper application package.
- Register in e-Application at :  
<http://e-grants.ed.gov>.
- Add Application Package to your Start Page.
- Complete forms.
  - [A checklist of required forms is on page 23 in the application package.](#)
- Upload files for narrative responses.
- Verify and submit application.
- Fax the signed SF 424 cover page to the Application Control Center at [202-245-6272](tel:202-245-6272).



# Submission of application

## e-Application

- Applicants are limited to uploading only one document no larger than 8 Mb for each narrative response section.
- Acceptable formats are .doc, .rtf, and .pdf **ONLY**.
- **DO NOT** upload documents in Microsoft Word 2007's .docx format.
- Submit early.



# Submission of application

## Paper submission

- Original and two copies of application must be submitted on or before application deadline.
- Mail or hand deliver original and two copies to:

U.S. Department of Education Application Control Center

Attention: CFDA Number 84.371A

LBJ Basement Level 1

400 Maryland Avenue, SW

Washington, DC 20202-4260







# Submission of application


## Paper submission

- Proof of Mailing
    - A legibly dated U.S. Postal Service postmark.
    - A legible mail receipt with the date of mailing stamped by the U.S. Postal Service.
    - A dated shipping label, invoice, or receipt from a commercial carrier.
    - Any other proof of mailing acceptable to the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education.
- 



# Submission of application

## Paper submission

- Proof of Mailing (cont'd)
    - We do not accept:
      - A private metered postmark.
      - A mail receipt that is not dated by the U.S. Postal Service.
  - Because of heightened security procedures at the U. S. Department of Education, mail processing can be very time consuming.
  - Submitting your application electronically will likely result in a timely receipt by the Department and is the preferred method of submission.
- 



# Contact

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